

Section 7: COORDINATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The general public, local elected officials, and state and federal resource agencies were encouraged to participate in this project from its inception. This section describes the type of coordination at each step of the study process. Lists of meetings including places and dates is provided in Tables 7-1, 7-2, and 7-3 at the end of this section.

7.1 1995 FEASIBILITY STUDY

Public involvement during the Feasibility Study included workshops and public information meetings held in Shreveport and Gilliam in August 1994; and Shreveport and Hosston in June 1995. In addition, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) comprised of Caddo Parish and municipal government members was formed to facilitate participation in the study process.

7.2 SCOPING PROCESS

On April 22, 1996, a notice of intent was published in the Federal Register (Vol. 61, Number 78) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In August 1997, the DOTD initiated studies to prepare the EIS. The scoping process involved early coordination with local officials and state and federal resource agencies to discuss the overall study process and to identify specific social, environmental, engineering, or other concerns that should be considered during the North-South Expressway study.

Two groups of local elected officials were formed, the Shreveport Officials Committee (Table 7-4) and the Rural Officials Committee (Table 7-5). These groups included members of the Technical Advisory Committee that had previously participated in the 1995 Feasibility Study.

Requests for relevant information concerning the study area were sent to the resource agencies and responses were received. These documents, along with all other agency correspondence are included in the Appendix. The agency scoping meeting included a field view of the study area that allowed a visual assessment of various communities and environmental resources that may be affected by the proposed project.

7.3 CORRIDOR STUDY

Public input during the corridor study focused on identifying a preferred corridor for the proposed highway. Public meetings were held in Shreveport and Hosston, Louisiana to obtain public opinion on corridor preference and information on specific issues of concern. Meetings were also held with the Shreveport and Rural Officials Committees. The public meetings included an open forum session in which citizens had the opportunity to speak with project representatives and review the corridor locations. This was followed by a short technical presentation and a question and answer

period. Comment forms were available that requested additional environmental information and opinions on the corridors presented that should be considered during corridor refinements.

A corridor recommendation was submitted on December 19, 1997 to participating state and federal resource agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The corridor recommendation detailed the corridor study process, provided the rationale for the selection of the preferred corridor, and requested comments. All agencies responding concurred with the Preferred Corridor.

7.4 ALIGNMENT STUDY

Public meetings were held in Shreveport and Hosston, Louisiana to present the alignment alternatives developed within the Preferred Corridor. Meetings were also held with the Shreveport and Rural Officials Committees. Meeting format was similar to that described in Section 7.2. Comment forms were distributed that requested alignment preferences, suggested revisions, and additional environmental information that should be considered.

State and federal resource agencies were invited to participate in a preliminary alignment field review. Comments received were considered during the alignment revisions. A preferred alignment recommendation was submitted to

participating state and federal resource agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and AHTD. The preferred alignment recommendation detailed the alignment study process, provided the rationale for the selection of the preferred alignment, and requested comments. All agencies responding concurred with the Preferred Alignment.

7.5 SOUTHERN TERMINUS STUDY

A public information meeting was held on February 2, 1999 in Shreveport, Louisiana to present and discuss the results of the Southern Terminus Study (See Section 2.4.4 for detailed discussion). A meeting was also held with the Shreveport Officials Committee to discuss this information. Comment forms were distributed that requested alternative preferences and the public was asked to rank the factors of greatest concern that were considered during this study.

A preferred alignment recommendation was submitted to participating state and federal resource agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and AHTD. The preferred alignment recommendation detailed the alignment study process, including the Southern Terminus Study, provided the rationale for the selection of the preferred alignment, and

requested comments. All agencies responding concurred with the Preferred Alignment.

7.6 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

Public hearings were held in Shreveport and Hosston to obtain formal comment on the Draft EIS. Table 7-6 presents the dates, locations and attendance at each hearing and the number of individual comments received.

Nineteen written comments were received from local citizens and organizations by the close of the comment period on October 15, 1999. Five oral comments were received at the public hearings. Comments received concerning the Draft EIS have been evaluated and considered in the identification of the Selected Alignment. Table 7-7 presents a summary of each comment received and a response. The public hearing comments received through October 15, 1999 are on file at the DOTD.

Comment letters on the Draft EIS made by state and federal resource agencies are provided in the Appendix. Table 7-7 presents the agency comments and responses.

7.7 PUBLIC NOTIFICATION METHODS

Notifications of meetings were handled in several ways:

- ☐ Direct mailings to persons on mailing lists (public, local officials committees, and agencies)

- ☐ Three area newspapers (Shreveport Sun, Shreveport Times, and Caddo Citizen)
- ☐ Additional copies of announcements sent to local officials committees for posting in their communities.

Three types of mailing lists were maintained for the study: public, local officials and agencies. The public mailing list was initiated from public meeting sign-in sheets from the 1995 Feasibility Study. As each additional public meeting was held, or as each phone or written inquiry was received, these persons were added to the mailing list. The current public mailing list contains nearly 850 names. Thirty names are on the Shreveport Officials Committee list and the Rural Officials Committee list contains 17 names. Officials are listed in Table 7-4 and Table 7-5. A combination of 14 state and federal agencies participated throughout the project either through meeting attendance or through regular mailings regarding on-going project studies and project status.

7.8 TOPICS OF COMMENT LETTERS ON THE DRAFT EIS

The majority of comments received on the Draft EIS and at the public hearings center on the impact of the proposed highway on personal property. The location of the Selected Alignment has been identified to first, fulfill the purpose and need of the proposed highway and second, to minimize impacts to the social and natural environment to the extent practicable.

Many property owners expressed concern that the proposed highway would impact their homes and property. DOTD recognizes property owner concerns and has worked at all stages of the project to minimize the number of homes taken by the proposed highway. It would be impossible to construct any highway facility without the impact to personal property.

There were several comment letters requesting specific line shifts to the Preferred Alignment in order to reduce property impacts. DOTD has evaluated all requests and specific responses can be found in Table 7-7. The location of the Selected Alignment reflects a shift to reduce personal

property impacts in the Hosston area near the proposed interchange at U.S. 71. In addition, this shift reduced farmed wetland impacts at this location. No additional properties were impacted by this alignment shift.

Other shifts that appear feasible and that will reduce impacts to property or residential relocations will be considered during the final design phase of the project.

**Table 7-1
PUBLIC MEETINGS**

DATE	LOCATION	ATTENDANCE	NUMBER OF WRITTEN COMMENTS
1995 Feasibility Study			
August 22, 1994	Gilliam Village Hall	68	14
August 23, 1994	Louisiana Technical College, Shreveport/Bossier Campus Auditorium	29	1
June 27, 1995	Hosston Elementary School Auditorium	55	11
June 28, 1995	Louisiana Technical College, Shreveport/Bossier Campus Auditorium	40	2
Subtotal		192	28
Corridor Study			
October 28, 1997	Louisiana Technical College, Shreveport/Bossier Campus Auditorium	118	21
October 29, 1997	Hosston Elementary School Auditorium	117	35
Subtotal		235	56
Alignment Study			
March 31, 1998	Louisiana Technical College, Shreveport/Bossier Campus Auditorium	140	13
April 1, 1998	Hosston Elementary School Auditorium	148	28
Subtotal		288	41
Southern Terminus Study			
February 2, 1999	Louisiana Technical College, Shreveport/Bossier Campus Auditorium	283	35
Subtotal		283	35
TOTALS		998	160

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc., Feasibility Study, 1995

Table 7-2
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)
SHREVEPORT AND RURAL OFFICIALS COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Date	Location	Invitees	Purpose
May 18, 1994		TAC List	Study Scope and Purpose
November 16, 1994		TAC List	Preliminary Corridor Alternates Review
June 14, 1995		TAC List	Revised Corridor Alternates Review
September 25, 1997	Baker Shreveport Office	Shreveport Officials List	Scoping
September 25, 1997	Hosston Village Hall	Rural Officials List	Scoping
October 28, 1997	Baker Shreveport Office	Shreveport Officials List	Corridor Review
October 29, 1997	Hosston Village Hall	Rural Officials List	Corridor Review
March 30, 1998	Baker Shreveport Office	Shreveport Officials List	Preliminary Alignment Review
April 1, 1998	Hosston Village Hall	Rural Officials List	Preliminary Alignment Review
February 2, 1999	Baker Shreveport Office	Shreveport Officials List	Southern Terminus Study
August 30, 1999	Baker Shreveport Office	Shreveport Officials List	Comments on Draft EIS
August 31, 1999	Hosston Village Hall	Rural Officials List	Comments on Draft EIS

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Table 7-3
AGENCY MEETINGS

Date	Agency	Purpose / Topic
September 24, 1997	Appropriate State and Federal Agencies	Scoping/Field Trip
November 18, 1997	Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, Division of Archaeology	Section 106 Coordination
November 19, 1997	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Merged NEPA/404 Study Process Coordination
March 19, 1998	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Wetland Delineation/ Section 404 Coordination
March 31, 1998	Appropriate State and Federal Agencies	Preliminary Alignment Field Review
April 14, 1999	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Wetland Mitigation Ratios
November 17, 2000	Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, Division of Archaeology	Section 106 Coordination

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

**Table 7-4
SHREVEPORT OFFICIALS COMMITTEE**

Representative	Affiliation
Representative Ernest Baylor, Jr.	District 3
Senator John B. Breaux	United States Senate
Lindy Broderick	Shreveport Chamber of Commerce
Steven W. Brown	Shreveport Chamber of Commerce
Representative Roy Brun	District 5
Councilman Bobby Joe Cooper	District A
Tom Dark	Director Of Public Works
S. Bruce Easterly	District Engineer Administrator
Representative Cedric Bradford Glover	District 4
Rebecca Graham	Shreveport Metropolitan Planning Commission
The Honorable Keith Hightower ¹	Mayor of Shreveport
Councilman Hilry Huckaby III ¹	District A
Robert E. Jones	Parish Engineer
Charles Kirkland, Director	Shreveport Metropolitan Planning Commission
Senator Mary Landrieu	United States Senate
Senator Max Tatum Malone	District 37
Representative James McCrery	District 4
Representative Danny R. Mitchell, Sr.	District 2
Gary Neathery	Floodplain Administration
Gary Norman	Parks and Recreation
Keith E. Norwood	Caddo Parish School Board
Ron Norwood, P.E.	City Engineer
Jeron Rogers	Director of Public Works
J. Kent Rogers, Executive Director	Northwest Louisiana Council of Governments
Commissioner Lawson Schuford ¹	Caddo Parish Commission, District 2
Ivory Samuel, President	Shreveport Negro Chamber of Commerce
Percy Sharp	Shreveport Chamber of Commerce
Ann Stokes	Shreveport Chamber of Commerce
Mike Strong ²	Director of Public Works
Senator Gregory Tarver, Sr.	District 39
Tim Wachtel	Shreveport Public Assembly & Recreation
Leon Wheeler, President ³	Shreveport Negro Chamber of Commerce
Commissioner Michael D. Williams	Caddo Parish Commission, District 3
The Honorable Robert "Bo" Williams	Mayor of Shreveport
Commissioner Hersey Wilson	Caddo Parish Commission, District 2

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

1 Newly Elected Officials - November 1998

2 Appointed - November 1998

3 Newly Elected Official - January 1999

**Table 7-5
RURAL OFFICIALS COMMITTEE**

Representative	Affiliation
Ben Woods	Gilliam Council
Commissioner James Morris	Caddo Parish Commission
Dan Logan Jr.	Caddo Levee Board
James W. Williamson	Mayor of Vivian
Kay Kline, President	Oil City Chamber of Commerce
Keith E. Norwood	Caddo Parish School Board
Mary Dunn, President	Vivian Chamber of Commerce
Mike Francis	Vivian Industrial Development Committee
Representative Roy Hopkins	District 1
S. Bruce Easterly	District Engineer Administrator
The Honorable Gorben McKinney	Mayor of Hosston
The Honorable Helen H. Adger	Mayor of Gilliam
The Honorable J.B. Nichols	Mayor of Mooringsport
The Honorable Jennifer Fant	Mayor of Belcher
The Honorable Larry Permenter	Mayor of Blanchard
The Honorable Sid Dean	Mayor of Ida
The Honorable Todd Hopkins	Mayor of Oil City

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

**Table 7-6
PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Date	Location	Approximate Attendance	Number Of Oral Comments	Number Of Written Comments
8/30/99	Louisiana Technical College Shreveport/Bossier Campus Auditorium	130	3	4
8/31/99	Hosston Elementary School Auditorium	89	2	15

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

**Table 7-7
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED ON DRAFT EIS**

COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS (in chronological order)		
Name	Comment	Response
Caddo Parish Commission	<p>DOTD should engage design consultants with stormwater impact experience when designing new highway.</p> <p>Consultants should review each watershed along the right of way to determine stormwater impact on the downstream property, including onsite observations of low lying areas and investigate the potential flooding of existing land and structures, potential erosion or siltation problems and channel requirements for intense storms.</p> <p>Required upstream stormwater detention.</p> <p>Downstream impact should address flooding, erosion, siltation, future development.</p> <p>Improvements should include but not limited to stormwater detention/retention, downstream channel improvements including widening, armour protection, minimum recommended finish floor elevations, construction of beams/dams around property/homes, possible buy-out of property/homes.</p> <p>Stormwater impact – drainage planning improvements should be coordinated with local government agencies for priority funding.</p>	<p>Comments noted. The DOTD will coordinate with Caddo Parish and other local government entities to insure that highway drainage has been adequately addressed during final design of the highway.</p>
INDIVIDUAL ORAL COMMENTS (in order of actual comment)		
Name	Comment	Response
Otis Jones	Concerned with real estate agents wishing to purchase property.	Comment noted. Mr. Jones was contacted to discuss DOTD property acquisition procedures.
Ron Norwood, City Engineer Shreveport, LA	The City of Shreveport supports the Preferred Alignment.	Comment noted

**Table 7-7 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED ON DRAFT EIS**

INDIVIDUAL ORAL COMMENTS (in order of actual comment)		
Name	Comment	Response
J. Kent Rogers, Executive Director North Louisiana Council of Governments (NLCOG) Shreveport, LA	NLCOG supports the Preferred Alignment.	Comment noted.
Carl Reese	1. Why are construction cost numbers so similar between the routes? 2. At the intersection with I-220, have you considered going further to the west bypassing the more populated areas?	1. The construction costs numbers are comparable between the alignments primarily due to their similarity with respect to total length, number of proposed interchanges and number of bridges, which are the main factors influencing the overall construction costs. 2. Moving the intersection with I-220 to the west would result in greater residential impacts and is not a feasible option in this area.
Johnnie Barnes	Request alignment shift 600 feet east to avoid personal property in Hosston area.	The DOTD has modified the Selected Alignment in this area. As a result, the highway alignment will no longer directly impact your property and will further reduce wetland impacts in this area.
INDIVIDUAL WRITTEN COMMENTS (in alphabetical order)		
Janie Brazel Shreveport, LA	Concerned with impacts to personal property.	Comment noted.
Johnnie Barnes	Request alignment shift 600 feet east to avoid personal property in Hosston area.	The DOTD has modified the Selected Alignment in this area. As a result, the highway alignment will no longer directly impact your property and will further reduce wetland impacts in this area.
Pam Barnes	Request alignment shift 600 feet east to avoid personal property in Hosston area.	The DOTD has modified the Selected Alignment in this area. As a result, the highway alignment will no longer directly impact your property and will further reduce wetland impacts in this area.
Pam and Johnnie Barnes Gilliam, LA	Request alignment shift 600 feet east to avoid personal property in Hosston area.	The DOTD has modified the Selected Alignment in this area. As a result, the highway alignment will no longer directly impact your property and will further reduce wetland impacts in this area.

**Table 7-7 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED ON DRAFT EIS**

INDIVIDUAL WRITTEN COMMENTS (in alphabetical order)		
Name	Comment	Response
Sandy Duncan Belcher, LA	Prefers route west of Hosston to avoid farmland impacts	Comment noted. The Selected Alignment avoids residential development and associated impacts west of Hosston. Based on comments received at the April 1, 1998 public meeting in Hosston, the alignment east of Hosston was publicly favored in this area.
Donald Cowart Gilliam, LA	Concerned with timeframe for property identification and acquisition for the highway	Comment noted.
Brad Harkleroad Shreveport, LA	Support proposed route.	Comment noted.
Richard Harris Shreveport, LA	Study and proposed route are good.	Comment noted
Mickey McDade Belcher, LA	Request alignment shift west of personal property near Gamm and Self Roads.	The DOTD has considered the shift described in your letter. Avoidance of your property would increase wetland and other natural resource impacts as well as impact to additional property owners.
Harry L. Miloy Shreveport, LA	Prefers Line 4 with interchange at U.S. 71/North Market St.	Comment noted. Please refer to Section 2.4 for a detailed discussion of this issue.
Freda Mitchell Ida, LA	Would like highway moved east of U.S. 71 in Ida area.	Comment noted. Please see Section 2.3 and 2.4 for a detailed discussion of Corridor locations and subsequent highway alignment development in this area.
James Mitchell Ida, LA	Would like highway moved east of U.S. 71 in Ida area.	Comment noted. Please see Section 2.3 and 2.4 for a detailed discussion of Corridor locations and subsequent highway alignment development in this area.
Sammy Mitchell Ida, LA	Would like highway moved east of U.S. 71 in Ida area.	Comment noted. Please see Section 2.3 and 2.4 for a detailed discussion of Corridor locations and subsequent highway alignment development in this area.
Teresa Mitchell Ida, LA	Would like highway moved east of U.S. 71 in Ida area.	Comment noted. Please see Section 2.3 and 2.4 for a detailed discussion of Corridor locations and subsequent highway alignment development in this area.

**Table 7-7 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED ON DRAFT EIS**

INDIVIDUAL WRITTEN COMMENTS (in alphabetical order)		
Name	Comment	Response
Ralph Penuell Gilliam, LA	Request alignment shift 200-300 yards east to avoid personal property in Hosston area.	The DOTD has modified the Selected Alignment in this area. As a result, impacts to your property as well as wetland impacts in this area have been reduced.
Wera Slay Belcher, LA	1. Would like highway shifted as far west as possible at Gamm and Self Roads. 2. Concerned with timeframe for property identification and acquisition for the highway.	1. The DOTD has considered the shift described in your letter. A westward shift at this location would increase wetland and other natural resource impacts as well as impact additional property owners. 2. Comment noted.
Cecil Sumner Ida, LA	Would like highway moved east of U.S. 71 in Ida area.	Comment noted. Please see Section 2.3 and 2.4 for a detailed discussion of Corridor locations and subsequent highway alignment development in this area.
James Sumner Ida, LA	Would like highway moved east of U.S. 71 in Ida area.	Comment noted. Please see Section 2.3 and 2.4 for a detailed discussion of Corridor locations and subsequent highway alignment development in this area.
Mary Evelyn Sumner Ida, LA	Would like highway moved east of U.S. 71 in Ida area.	Comment noted. Please see Section 2.3 and 2.4 for a detailed discussion of Corridor locations and subsequent highway alignment development in this area.

Table 7-8
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON DRAFT EIS

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, August 31, 1999
Mr. Robert D. Lawrence

Issue: ALTERNATIVES

Comment:	Reference: p.2-1 A proposed schedule for construction of the preferred alternative should be presented in this section (Section 2). Please incorporate into the Final EIS.
Response:	Funding is not secured for project construction. Furthermore, the project's construction is currently not included in the MPO's Transportation Improvement Plan. It would be inappropriate to include a proposed schedule for construction at this time.

Issue: CORRIDOR STUDY

Comment:	Reference: pp. 2-2 to 2-24 Information currently presented in this section (Section 2) of the DEIS and the accompanying exhibits present difficulty for the average reader in understanding how "alternates", "alternatives", "corridors", "corridor alternatives", "segments", and "links" relate to each other. Suggestions to improve this section are: (1) eliminate some of these terms and use the remaining ones more consistently, and (2) list the associated "segments" or "alternates" on Exhibits 2-4 and 2-6 beside their individual colored diagrams; and/or modify exhibits 2-3 and 2-5, or create a new exhibit to clearly show each individual "corridor" with all of its associated "segments". This way the reader will be able to more easily relate individual "corridor" discussions in the text with locations on the accompanying exhibits.
Response	Comment noted. This section will be reviewed and clarified where possible.

Issue: PRELIMINARY ALIGNMENTS

Comment:	Reference: p. 2-29, Exhibit 2-8 Numbering of "lines" on the map is inconsistent with text discussions and later exhibits. For clarity, we suggest dropping "section" number designations from "line" numbers. For example, instead of "Line 2-3" it would read "Line 3" on the map. No explanation why within Section 2 a portion of Line 3 is sited well outside the "preferred corridor".
Response	Comment noted. This section will be reviewed and clarified where possible. A brief explanation of why this line is outside the corridor is provided in Section 2.

**Table 7-8 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON DRAFT EIS**

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, August 31, 1999 Mr. Robert D. Lawrence	
Issue: UTILITY RELOCATIONS	
Comment:	<p>Reference: p.4-44, Section 4.8.1.</p> <p>The DEIS mentions potential impacts to wetlands as a result of utility relocations (electrical, gas, water, sewage) but does not identify or analyze the effects on utility services and providers in terms of potential disruption and costs. In addition, phone and fiber optic lines should be addressed in the FEIS.</p>
Response	<p>Potential localized impacts to natural resources and disruptions and costs associated with utility relocations will be addressed during the final design of the highway once specific design details and construction sequencing are known. In general, the individual construction contractor is responsible for contacting the appropriate local officials and utility providers to coordinate a work schedule that will avoid disrupting services during construction.</p>
Issue: MITIGATION	
Comment:	<p>Reference: General p. 4-22, Section 4.6.1, p. 4-41, Section 4.6.3.</p> <p>The DEIS mentions a number of mitigation measures, but lacks adequate descriptions of the specific measures and how each measure is expected to lessen potential impacts of the proposed action. In addition, the DEIS often characterizes mitigation as "could be implemented". For example, p. 4-22 states that "the following measures could be implemented" to reduce impacts from stormwater runoff. Page 4-41 states that "secondary impacts can be minimized with the proper implementation of sedimentation and erosion control techniques." There are many other occurrences of this phrasing in the DEIS. In each instance where mitigation is presented, details on the nature of the action and how its implementation would lessen the impacts described. It is not reasonable for the DEIS to take credit for reduced impacts of potential mitigation unless there is a commitment to implement these measures. It is expected that the Record of Decision (ROD) for this EIS will detail specific mitigation measures that will be implemented.</p>
Response	<p>Specific measures to reduce certain impacts can only be finalized once the final design of the highway is completed. The DEIS does not "take credit" for proposed mitigation measures, but merely presents a number of feasible mitigation options that could be implemented once specific design details have been finalized.</p>

Table 7-8 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON DRAFT EIS

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, August 31, 1999
Mr. Robert D. Lawrence

Issue: SOCIAL IMPACTS

Comment:	<p>Relocations.</p> <p>Reference: p. 4-11, Section 4.1.4</p> <p>The DEIS states that "Current data collected indicate that adequate replacement housing may not be readily available in the appropriate price ranges for the North-Shreveport area at this time." The FEIS should explain the procedures or plans in place for rectifying this problem. In addition, the FEIS should distinguish between procedures for renters versus home owners.</p>
Response	<p>The DEIS specifically states that DOTD is committed to locating replacement housing within the occupant's financial means and within the general area of the project and when necessary providing housing of last resort. Real estate availability will be reassessed once final design of the highway has been completed. Further and more detailed information regarding relocations is available in the DOTD publication titled, "Acquisition of right of way and relocation assistance" which has been added to the Appendix. This information was explained at the public hearings and brochures were made available to interested parties. Relocation assistance is offered to both owners and renters.</p>
Comment:	<p>Property Values.</p> <p>Reference: p. 4-7, Section 4.12.</p> <p>The DEIS states that "property values will generally increase along highways for which an interchange has been proposed as land becomes more desirable for commercial and industrial development." This statement should be supported by analysis for the FEIS.</p>
Response	<p>The text has been revised to state that "property values could increase near proposed interchange locations" The extent and type rural interchange development is dependent on many variables (Hartgen and Kim (1998) "Commercial Development at Rural and Small-town Interstate Exits").</p>

Table 7-8 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON DRAFT EIS

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, August 31, 1999
Mr. Robert D. Lawrence

Issue: ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Comment:	<p>Induced Growth/Secondary Economic Impacts</p> <p>Reference: p. 4-1, Section 4.1, p. 4-7, Section 4.12, pp. 4-17 to 4-18, Section 4.3.2, p. 4-42, Section 4.7.2, p. 4-45, Section 4.8.2</p> <p>The FEIS should more fully evaluate the potential extent and impacts of secondary development caused by the proposed project. A number of conclusions are stated without any supporting analysis or evidence. Page 4-1 states that the project "could spur indirect or secondary land use impacts resulting from new or increased residential, commercial, or industrial development in the project area." Page 4-7 states that secondary development is expected but does not attempt to quantify or evaluate its impacts. Page 4-17 states that "new and expanded industrial initiatives in the Agurs business park would provide employment opportunities", but provides no basis for this statement. Page 4-42 states that "sufficient land exists suitable for secondary development outside of the Swift Bayou Canal floodplain. Proposed interchanges for all alignments would not promote incompatible floodplain development at this location." Page 4-45 states that "sufficient non-wetland area land exists at all remaining interchanges locations to accommodate adjacent secondary development." These statements should be supported by analysis or evidence contained in the FEIS.</p>
Response	<p>There is no planned development in the study area. Outside of the Shreveport Metro area there is no land use planning in place that would identify future areas of growth. The statements made reflect a general premise that some growth will occur as a response to the presence of a four lane facility and that given the current land uses, development would not necessarily negatively impact either floodplains or wetlands.</p>
Comment:	<p>Impacts on Timber/Forestry Industry</p> <p>Reference: p.3-10, Section 3.3.1, p. 4-18, Section 4.4.1.</p> <p>Page 3-10 states that "forestry is the largest agricultural industry in Louisiana," and remains major land and economic component of Caddo Parish." Impacts to this industry are not discussed in the DEIS. Please discuss in the FEIS.</p>
Response	<p>A paragraph has been added to Section 4.4.1 that discusses this issue.</p>

Table 7-8 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON DRAFT EIS

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, August 31, 1999
 Mr. Robert D. Lawrence

Issue: TRAFFIC STUDY

Comment:	<p>Traffic Study</p> <p>Reference: p. 1-6, Section 1.4.2, p. 1-8, Table 1-2.</p> <p>The DEIS states that "an analysis of existing and future traffic conditions within the study was conducted". The study was conducted in 1995 and forecasted traffic in 2005 and 2020. The FEIS should address whether the study is still valid given the time that has elapsed since the study and its assumptions were developed. Given that this study is a critical element of the recommended action, it should be provided as an Appendix to the FEIS.</p>
Response	<p>Traffic analysis were conducted in 1995, 1996, and 1998. The traffic study is still considered valid for the development of the document's Purpose and Need. The analyses are on file at the DOTD and are not included in the appendix.</p>

Issue: OIL AND GAS RESOURCES

Comment:	<p>Impacts to Oil and Gas Industries</p> <p>Reference: p.4-19, Section 4.5.</p> <p>The DEIS identifies 37 producing oil and gas well sites that are expected to be impacted by the proposed highway, but does not attempt to evaluate or analyze those impacts. Inactive wells should also be identified and evaluated as well as unexploited leases. Please evaluate in the FEIS.</p>
Response	<p>The number of active oil and gas wells were provided to serve as a "barometer" of the potential monetary expenditure of purchasing this property for right-of-way purposes. Discussions with the LA Department of Natural Resources' Office of Conservation, and the DOTD confirm that construction of a new highway would not jeopardize or in any way negatively impact oil and gas production in this area. As discussed on Page 4-19 of the DEIS, a feasibility study would be conducted by a qualified petroleum engineer on each well impacted to estimate underlying reserves based on past production records. This study would determine whether a new well would be constructed or compensated for lost reserves would be provided to the owner. In-active wells would also be evaluated at that time.</p>

**Table 7-8 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON DRAFT EIS**

**Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, August 31, 1999
Mr. Robert D. Lawrence**

Issue: FLOODPLAINS

Comment:	<p>Floodplain Impacts</p> <p>Reference: pp. 4-41 to 4-42, Section 4.7.</p> <p>The DEIS lists "impacts" to floodplains in terms of acreage, but does not provide any details on the nature and severity of the expected impacts. Please clarify in the FEIS.</p>
Response	<p>A detailed hydraulic analysis will be conducted in accordance with CFR 23 650 during the final design phase of the highway. This analysis would evaluate the effects of floodplain encroachment on flood elevations and will determine the appropriate design for pipes, culverts, and bridges to insure flood elevations would not substantially change due to highway construction. Coordination with Caddo Parish and other government agencies will be conducted as part of this process.</p>

Issue: WETLANDS

Comment:	<p>Wetland Impacts</p> <p>Reference: pp. 4-42 to 4-45, Section 4.8.</p> <p>The DEIS lists "impacts" to wetlands in terms of acreage, but does not provide any details on the nature and severity of the expected impacts. Please clarify in the FEIS.</p>
Response	<p>A detailed discussion of each wetland impacted is provided in the Wetlands Technical report.</p>
Comment:	<p>Mitigation Efforts</p> <p>Reference: p. 2-39, Section 2.4.5</p> <p>The document states that "Impacts were minimized to the greatest extent practicable in accordance with the Section 404 b(1) Guidelines." The specific measures that were used to minimize impacts and how they mitigate potential impacts should be described in the FEIS.</p>
Response	<p>Wetland and other natural resource minimization efforts are described in Sections 2.3 and 2.4. Section 4.8 discusses wetland impacts and on-going mitigation development efforts.</p>

Table 7-8 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON DRAFT EIS

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, August 31, 1999
Mr. Robert D. Lawrence

Comment:	<p>Mitigation Ratios</p> <p>Reference: p. 4-45, Section 4.8.3.</p> <p>The document states that "Forested wetland impacts would be replaced at a ratio of at least 1:1." There is no discussion of mitigation efforts for wetlands other than forested. Please incorporate into the FEIS.</p>
Response	Revisions have been made to Section 4.8.3 to mitigate for all impacted wetlands.

Issue: THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

Comment:	<p>State Species of Concern</p> <p>Reference: p. 3-24, Section 3.9.1, p. 4-47, Section 4.10.</p> <p>Specific habitat locations for the nine locations of state species or habitat areas of special concern within the Preferred Corridor are not provided or specifically described in the baseline environmental conditions survey, nor are impacts described and evaluated within the DEIS. Please document analysis in the FEIS.</p>
Response	Specific surveys for state species are not required and have not been conducted. Information was obtained from the LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Natural Heritage Program at the onset of this project to identify potential areas of concern. Alignments were developed to avoid and minimize impacts to these areas where possible. Impacts are described in Section 4.10.

Issue: FARMLANDS

Comment:	<p>Land Use Classification Terms</p> <p>Reference: pp. 3-8 to 3-9, Section 3.3, p. 3-23, Section 3.7.3, p. 4-45, Table 4-11, p. 4-53, Table 4-13.</p> <p>On page 3-8 agricultural land use is discussed. On page 3-23, "cropland" is discussed. Table 4-11, which details Natural Community Impacts, lists acres of cropland impacted. Table 4-13 details Farmland Impacts. If the DEIS is making a distinction between cropland and farmland, this distinction needs to be clarified. It appears that cropland that is in row crop agricultural use is farmland, and should be evaluated for impacts.</p>
Response	Farmland is described and evaluated in accordance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FFPA) of 1981 and FHWA's 1989 guidelines for implementing the FFPA for highway projects. As described in Section 3.3.1, cropland is one of several land uses and distinctive vegetative communities found on areas identified as Prime Farmlands by the NRCS.

Table 7-8 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON DRAFT EIS

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, August 31, 1999
Mr. Robert D. Lawrence

Issue: CULTURAL RESOURCES

Comment: Cultural Resource Sites

Reference: pp. 3-25 to 3-30, Section 3.11, pp. 4-53 to 4-54, Section 4.13

Although few sites may exist within the study area, information describing known and documented archeological and historical sites is lacking in the EIS. These sections also make no reference to prior or planned coordination/consultation with the SHPO or Native American tribes who might have an interest in the impacted area. Please address in the FEIS.

Response

These sections will be expanded based on the completed Phase I investigation. Coordination with above agencies is documented in the Appendix.

Comment:

High Probability Archaeological Sites

Reference: p. S-9, Table S-1, p. 4-53, Section 4.13

Table S-1 indicates that the Preferred Alignment includes the largest amount of high probability area for archaeological sites, but there is no mention of this in the analysis of potential impacts on cultural resources. Coordination with the State Archeologist and SHPO should be discussed in the FEIS. If a programmatic agreement is to be developed it should be incorporated in FEIS.

Response

Comment noted. The DOTD, FHWA, and the SHPO have reached a consensus for the completion of the Section 106 process. Documentation is included in the Appendix.

Issue: AIR QUALITY

Comment:

Predicted Impacts

Reference: pp. 4-55 to 4-56, Section 4.14.2

The DEIS should explain why the predicted highest 1-hour CO concentrations are lower for the build alternatives than for the No Action alternative. The reader assumes that it is because of the reduced traffic on existing roads, but the DEIS does not address this. Please clarify in the FEIS.

Response

Comment noted. The predicted design year build CO concentrations are lower than the design year no-build concentrations because of the traffic diversions along those road links with the highest potential CO. Because the proposed concentrations are lower than the NAAQS, especially as low as those predicted for this project, the CO levels have been reported as being below the standard. A detailed discussion of the changes for each alternative is not warranted.

Table 7-8 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON DRAFT EIS

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, August 31, 1999
Mr. Robert D. Lawrence

Comment:	<p>Ozone Modeling</p> <p>Reference: p. 4-55, Section 4.14.2.</p> <p>The DEIS evaluates impacts of CO levels but does not evaluate other pollutants. The document states that a regional analysis was not done because the area is in attainment for ozone. This explanation is confusing, since p. 3-30 states that Caddo Parish is in an attainment for all criteria pollutants. Although a conformity analysis is not required, the FEIS must evaluate impacts on O3 and other pollutant levels as a result of the proposed highway.</p>
Response	<p>An ozone impact analysis is not required for the project area. Correspondence with the LA DEQ Air Quality Division (Refer to June 10, 1996 LA DEQ letter) states that Caddo Parish is designated as an attainment parish with regard to criteria pollutants and precursors and the North-South Expressway project is not subject to transportation conformity requirements. Additional analysis would duplicate previous efforts and is not necessary.</p>

Table 7-8 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON DRAFT EIS

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, August 31, 1999
Mr. Robert D. Lawrence

Issue: NOISE

Comment:

Noise Modeling Results

Reference: pp. 4-56 to 4-74, Section 4.15

Table 4-17 on p. 4-62 of the DEIS indicates that noise levels would be as much as 10 dBA lower under the proposed action that are currently experienced. These results should be explained. The reader assumes that it may be due to reduced traffic levels in these areas, but the document does not state that, nor are modeling assumptions described. P. 4-74 states that "there are no practical noise abatement measures". Given this statement, the DEIS should explain and fully evaluate the impacts of the unmitigated highway noise on the 114 receptors identified. At a minimum, issues of nuisance, vibration, and property values should be addressed. Full details on the noise analysis, including the modeling assumptions and inputs, should be provided as an Appendix so that the reader may evaluate what is only summarized in the DEIS. Please address these concerns in the FEIS.

Response

Comment noted. Some of the predicted design year build sound levels are lower than the design year no-build concentrations due to traffic diversions, particularly along sections of U.S. 71.

The noise analysis was conducted in accordance with 23 CFR Part 772 and the DOTD's Highway Traffic Noise Policy. Evaluation of unmitigated highway noise is not required. In general, "nuisance" noise would be very difficult to quantify and/or define and would vary from person to person. Vibration impacts from mobile sources are typically not studied for highway projects, but may be performed on transit projects such as subways or light rail and then only during final design when site specific geological data is collected. Vibration impacts from construction activities would be indirectly covered under state regulations governing the proper use and maintenance of equipment. Potential noise impacts on property values is not required. Furthermore, each potentially affected property would need to be independently analyzed and would need to consider a number of factors such as the condition of the local economy, desire for access to the proposed roadway, business potential, regional and local sales histories, existing and future zoning, and individual's reaction to certain sound levels. This level of effort is not necessary for this study.

More details on the noise analysis are included in the Noise Study Technical Report.

Table 7-8 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON DRAFT EIS

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, August 31, 1999
Mr. Robert D. Lawrence

Issue: CONSTRUCTION

Comment:	<p>Construction Impacts</p> <p>Reference: General The DEIS does not evaluate, outside of relocations, the effects of the proposed highway construction on residents and businesses, including issues of access, safety, noise, vibration, and air quality. Please address these concerns and quantify the potential impacts in the FEIS</p>
Response	Air quality construction impacts are discussed in Section 4.14.3. Noise construction impacts are discussed in Section 4.15.5. Section 4.18 has been expanded to discuss other construction impact issues.
Comment:	<p>Construction Impacts on Drainage</p> <p>Reference: pp. 4-75 to 4-76, Section 4.18, Appendix B (Caddo Soil and Water Conservation District letter).</p> <p>The DEIS does not address the concerns listed in the referenced letter regarding construction, including disruption of drainage on agricultural lands, and property access for farmers and other landowners. Please address these concerns in the FEIS.</p>
Response	The DOTD will coordinate with Caddo Parish and other local government entities to insure that highway drainage has been adequately addressed during final design of the highway. Property access for farmers and other landowners will also be addressed at this time.

Agency U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, September 1, 1999
Mr. Russell C. Watson

Issue: DOCUMENT EVALUATION

Comment:	The draft EIS details structural, environmental, and cultural resource impacts and assesses alignment alternatives for the proposed highway. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has reviewed the information provided, and offers the following comments. The above referenced document adequately discusses all relevant environmental issues and addresses all of our concerns.
Response:	Comment noted.

